



CANDIDATE RESPONSIBILITIES

The BCNU Constitution and Bylaws, as well as Policy 5.2.8 outlines general information regarding elections. However, there is need for clarity regarding candidate responsibilities during an election. The provincial Nominations Committee has the authority under the Constitution and Bylaws to manage elected officer elections, provide this clarity, and remedy any complaints regarding candidate compliance with responsibilities.

BCNU members, including BCNU Council, are entitled to the right and the freedom to express their support or non-support for a candidate of choice, which may include the endorsing of an individual candidate or slate. However, members filling temporary staff positions, members of the Nominations Committee, and Regional Nomination Representatives are not entitled to the right and freedom to express their support or non-support for a candidate of choice, including the endorsing of an individual candidate or slate.

Candidates must comply with the BCNU Constitution and Bylaws, relevant union policies, the collective agreement, labour legislation, and any other relevant legislation such as the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA) and Personal Information Protection Act (PIPA) and the Workers Compensation Act.

All candidates, both provincial and regional, must comply with the following requirements, conduct, responsibilities and guidelines.

References

- Policy 2.0.1 – Code of Conduct for BCNU Council
- Policy 2.0.4 – Conflict of Interest – Other Elected Positions
- Policy 2.0.5 – Code of Conduct Members Holding an Elected Position
- Policy 2.0.6 – Code of Conduct Members
- Policy 5.2.8 – Elected Officer Elections
- Policy 5.6.12 – Election Eligibility - Steward Experience
- Policy 6.1.1 Breach of Duty
- BCNU Constitution and Bylaws – especially Articles 1, 2, 3, 5, 11 and 12
- BCNU Climate Goals

Eligibility Requirements

Candidates must fulfill all requirements under the BCNU Constitution and Bylaws and relevant policies.

Candidates must be members in good standing of the BCNU.

Candidate Conduct

Candidates, like all BCNU members:

- Must not do anything that jeopardizes or is detrimental to the welfare of the union.
- Must uphold the mission and core values of the BCNU.
- Must act honestly and with integrity.
- Must ensure their campaigns and campaign materials are accurate and not misleading.

- Must not interfere with the campaigns or campaign materials of another candidate.
- Must not make statements or take actions that are unduly personal or malicious.
- Must not request or allow staff to be used to promote or assist with any aspect of their campaign. However, members of the union, including BCNU Council, but excluding members filling temporary staff positions, are entitled to the right and the freedom to express their support or non-support for a candidate of choice. This may include endorsing a candidate or running with them in a slate.
- Must not campaign on paid BCNU time, other than at events organized by the Nominations Committee.
- Are responsible for the actions of their campaign (including those participating or assisting in their campaign) and for their campaign materials.
- Must not interfere with the normal operations of the worksite or interrupt the delivery of care.
- Must provide verification of any statements issued in their campaign if requested by the Nominations Committee.
- Must have express permission from any person who is depicted or named in their campaign materials.
- Must not engage in any action that will place them in a conflict of interest as per their existing duties.
- Must not communicate with BCNU members concerning the BCNU election using any of their employer's communication systems or BCNU email groups or via privileged access to member emails.
- Must not utilize BCNU email addresses for any campaign purpose. Incumbent candidates must use a standard statement or out-of-office statement that directs people to a non-BCNU email address.
- Must not use BCNU-funded communication devices, BCNU-funded telephone numbers, or BCNU email addresses for any campaign or election purpose.
- May openly and freely debate policies and positions; however, they must speak to issues and policies affecting BCNU membership as a whole, and not those of individual members.

BCNU stewards may voluntarily assist with a candidate's campaign, but time devoted to this assistance must not be logged as paid steward time.

The Nominations Committee may remove a candidate from the ticket of nominations for serious or repeated breach of the election rules or procedures, or other serious election misconduct.

Candidate Responsibilities: Public Health and Occupational Health and Safety

The Nominations Committee expects candidates to follow any guidelines, rules, and/or orders set out by the Office of the BC Public Health Officer, the BC Centre for Disease Control, Health Authority Medical Health Officers, or the Employers.

Rationale:

- The safety of our members and communities is of utmost importance and it is imperative to ensure that candidates follow occupational safety and public health guidelines and orders.

Candidates and/or candidate supporters are permitted to visit worksites that are not their own for the purpose of campaigning.

Prior to visiting any worksites, Candidates and/or candidate supporters must identify if any restrictions related to occupational safety or public health measures are in place and fully comply with all such restrictions.

Rationale:

- Access restrictions may be in place in any health-care sites, including long-term care, assisted living facilities, and hospitals to limit the spread of communicable disease.
- Public health measures such as the wearing of masks, utilizing hand sanitizer, and keeping physical distance indoors are means to prevent the spread of communicable disease.

Candidates' strict adherence to these guidelines is critical for preventing the spread of any communicable disease. The Nominations Committee will take these guidelines very seriously and any breaches will be of high consequence and penalty to the candidate involved. This may be cause for removal from the ticket of nominations.

Candidates may refer to the BC Centre for Disease Control and/or individual employer websites for updates on any restrictions, but all recommendations of the Nomination Committee, which independently oversees BCNU elections, must be upheld.

Campaign Materials

Campaigning is defined as the circulating of published materials relating to an election campaign.

Prior to commencing campaigning, candidates are required to attend a mandatory orientation session hosted by the Nominations Committee.

BCNU Sanctioned Campaign Materials

The candidate biographical sketch and statement of objectives submitted on the nomination form will be approved by the Nominations Committee and made available to the membership. In order to be approved, information provided:

- Must be factual and non-defamatory.
- Must not be inappropriate, offensive, or misrepresent the candidate. For example, materials containing racist or sexist content would be found to be offensive and inappropriate.

Candidate information containing hyperlinks will not be published on BCNU webpages.

Nominations Committee materials published on the BCNU Elections webpage are the only materials that will be published for use on BCNU bulletin boards. Unit-specific guidelines may apply. This includes:

- Background information regarding election rules and decisions
- Disclaimers
- Reminders about candidate responsibilities
- Lists of candidates
- Event information
- Election information

BCNU bulletin boards are not to be accessed by individual candidates. There will be no posting of campaign material on BCNU bulletin boards, except for BCNU bulletins produced and circulated by BCNU.

BCNU may produce bulletins containing sanctioned information that will be distributed to stewards to post on union bulletin boards.

Non-Sanctioned Campaign Materials

Non-sanctioned candidate campaign materials must not be posted or left unattended anywhere in the worksite, including on union bulletin boards and in break rooms

Candidates must not permit any BCNU member who has ceased to be a Member in Good Standing to campaign on their behalf.

Campaign materials (whether sanctioned or non-sanctioned) are not permitted to include photos of a candidate taken by the BCNU or photos (whether taken by the candidate or otherwise) that have been used in any BCNU communication materials.

Social Media Use

Candidates will not utilize any authorized BCNU social media accounts for any campaigning purposes during BCNU elections.

If a currently elected official is an admin (administrator) of an authorized BCNU social media account, and if they are not the successful candidate, they must transfer the account to the newly elected official.

Elected officials who are moderators of authorized social media account(s) should consider transferring moderator rights to an individual that is not running in the election, if possible.

Although the Nominations Committee does not actively monitor social media, it does look at social media in response to election complaints.

Complaints

Candidates with published campaign materials or statements that attract an official complaint will be asked to immediately remove the impugned statement(s). The candidate will then be given the opportunity to verify the accuracy of the statement(s) within a 24-hour period. If the accuracy of the statement(s) is established the Nominations Committee will determine if the statement(s) can be republished.

There are consequences for frivolous or vexatious complaints and/or for attempts to mislead the Nominations Committee.

Sanctions & Penalties

The Nominations Committee has the authority to issue a potential range of sanctions and penalties to a candidate in relation to any breach of an election-related rule or policy or any failure to cooperate with a direction of the Nominations Committee. These sanctions and penalties include but are not limited to directions to issue public apologies or retractions; suspension of a candidate's campaign; and removal from the ticket of nominations and the ballot.

Contact With the Nominations Committee

Candidates (including incumbents) and staff not directly involved in supporting the committee should not have any direct communications with any member of the committee, including their independent legal advisor, except through the elections email address (elections@bcnu.org) or as necessary to respond to communications initiated by the committee during the investigation of a complaint.